



Health Finance and Policy Committee
Minnesota House of Representatives
HF 4706 – A22-0419 DE amendment
April 7, 2022

Dear Committee Members,

The Minnesota Business Partnership is a membership organization comprised of business leaders from more than 100 of Minnesota’s largest employers, employing more than half a million workers across the state. Minnesota ranks near the top in the nation for health care coverage and we are proud of our wealth of world-class health care providers. Affordable health insurance and access to health care is vitally important to our members and I write to express our opposition to the A22-0419 DE Amendment and highlight just a couple of our concerns.

The proposal to require nurse staffing committees is problematic. Hospitals are already short-staffed and prohibiting staffing flexibility that hospitals have relied on throughout the pandemic will leave little option but to reduce services or turn away patients.

Ensuring the safety and well-being of patients is the top priority for our hospitals. The pandemic has placed tremendous strain on hospital staff and resources, and flexible team-based care is a highly effective practice for maintaining patient care during times of critical staffing shortages.

Our members support affordable and accessible health care and have the utmost respect for nurses. We understand the burden placed on nurses and other health care providers during the pandemic. However, the staffing requirements resulting from this legislation will cause the cost of hospital care to increase or significantly alter hospital staffing composition and may require nursing staff to handle additional administrative tasks that are currently covered by other staff.

The inclusion of the “public option” for health insurance will lead to greater cost-shifting for private-pay individuals in order to make up for the lower reimbursement rates from public programs. As higher health care costs are passed along to private health insurers, insurance rates for workers enrolled in employer-sponsored health plans will increase.

This plan could jeopardize access to health care as the limitations of cost-shifting are reached. As the public-pay population increases, health care providers will be increasingly unable to make up for lower reimbursement rates. Providers already operating on the margin may be forced to cut services without greater taxpayer support.

In closing, our shared goal is for patients to have access to the highest quality of care possible at an affordable price. I appreciate the Chair's effort to improve health care quality and access, but many provisions in this bill will move us further from that goal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "D Dwight". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D".

Dan Dwight

Health Policy Director
Minnesota Business Partnership